

**CLINICAL DISORDERS OF THE HEART BEAT.** Samuel Bellet, M.D., Director, Division of Cardiology, Philadelphia General Hospital; Associate Professor of Cardiology, Graduate School of Medicine and Assistant Professor of Medicine, School of Medicine, both at the University of Pennsylvania; and Clinical Professor of Medicine, Women's Medical College, Philadelphia. Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia, 1953. 373 pages, 163 illustrations, \$3.50.

Recent advances in our understanding of the mechanism and treatment of cardiac arrhythmias, the growing importance of disturbances of cardiac rhythm during surgery and the ease of studying disordered cardiac mechanisms by the direct writing electrocardiograph have made an up-to-date general treatise on the subject of cardiac arrhythmias urgently needed. This need is admirably fulfilled by Doctor Bellet's well organized, thorough, lucid volume. The book is divided into four general sections. A presentation of the general features of disorders of the heart beat is followed in order by a discussion of the individual arrhythmias, clinical conditions where arrhythmias are important such as electrolyte disturbances and finally, a consideration of digitalis, quinidine and procaine amide.

Recent theories concerning the genesis of the auricular arrhythmias are presented clearly. The bibliography of 496 references is up-to-date and even comparatively rare disturbances of cardiac rhythm are described.

The approach to therapy is sound. Simple and conservative measures are emphasized and the indiscriminate use of intravenous therapy is properly decried. The illustrations are adequate and short outline summaries in many chapters are helpful in emphasizing important points. It would have been valuable to have included a short section upon the details of investigating an ectopic rhythm by the use of special chest and esophageal leads and the graphic analysis of auricular and ventricular mechanisms in more complex arrhythmias. This book can be recommended highly to all internists and physicians interested in cardiovascular disease and it will be a valuable reference for students and interns.

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**REHABILITATION OF THE OLDER WORKER.** Edited by Wilma Donahue, James Rae Jr., and Roger B. Berry. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1953. 200 pages, \$3.25.

The material for this book was presented at the University of Michigan Fourth Annual Conference on Aging and the discussion was devoted to the topic, "Rehabilitation of the Handicapped Worker Over Forty."

The University of Michigan was joined in the sponsorship of the conference by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Federal Security Agency, the Michigan State Medical Society, and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Michigan State Department of Public Instruction. More than fifty national, state, and community organizations served as participating agencies and sent delegates to the conference.

The object of the conference was (1) to focus attention upon rehabilitation of older handicapped workers as a means of augmenting the supply of manpower to meet defense needs; (2) to acquaint public and voluntary organizations with up-to-date knowledge of the technical skills and scientific advances available for rehabilitating the older workers; (3) to encourage the use of present knowledge by spreading it more widely among existing community agencies; (4) to stress the common denominators in the problems to be overcome in rehabilitating all types of workers; (5) to provide a means for securing the attention and support of all management, labor, professional and community groups concerned with the problem; (6) to encourage cooperative community activity and effective working ar-

rangements between public, professional, and voluntary agencies; and (7) to define areas and problems which seem to require priority for further research and study.

The above topics were discussed in conferences and talks by leading authorities in each field.

The material in this book is of special interest to all those in the medical profession interested in rehabilitation of the handicapped patient.

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**MODERN CONCEPTS IN MEDICINE.** Julius Jensen, Ph.D. (in Medicine), University of Minnesota, M.R.C.S. (England), L.R.C.P. (London). C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1953. 636 pages, \$11.50.

Dr. Jensen attempts to explain disease in terms of stress and its effects. He describes (page 52) "how cellular functions have become adapted to the needs of the body. . . . The body can adapt itself to considerable variations in these functions, but when the variations exceed certain limits, they upset the normal economy and are called diseases." Again on page 61 he states that "life . . . may be considered a constant state of adaptation, either to change in the surrounding medium or in the systems which compose the organism. . . . Adaptation may be disturbed on different levels. The elementary adaptive processes may be disturbed; there may be disturbances of the systems which regulate the adaptive processes; and finally, the 'target' structures themselves, that is, the structures which have been developed to facilitate adaptation, may respond in a manner which is pathological within the concept expressed above."

In amplification of his thesis he then proceeds to write a text of medicine with a functional approach. This is somewhat sketchy but generally sound and offers the student information and suggestions not found in most texts on medicine. (However, in passing, it may be noted that his explanation of cancer is lame and almost naive in contrast to the lucid and brilliant concepts outlined by Dr. Clarence C. Little at his recent Lane Lectures at Stanford University School of Medicine.)

It would be easier perhaps to comprehend (and thus to go along more wholeheartedly with) the author if he did not use so many new and often unwieldy terms in his text. As it is, the reviewer is forced to recommend that a glossary be added to the book in order to keep the reader from floundering. For example, on page 19, in introducing his basic concept, the author discusses "a hierarchy of formative processes in biological organization" with the human body "thought of as a set of dynamic processes." (Note, also, the first paragraph of this review.)

In summary then, this is a thoughtful, provocative book, philosophical in its outlook but definitely unfinished in what it attempts to do. It is often involved, sometimes repetitive and difficult to comprehend. The reviewer hopes that the author will try again.

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**PROGRESS IN NEUROLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY—Volume VIII.** Edited by E. A. Spiegel, M.D., Professor and Head of the Department of Experimental Neurology, Temple University School of Medicine, Philadelphia, Grune & Stratton, New York, 1953. 591 pages, \$10.00.

The value of this annual summary of progress in the fields of neurology and psychiatry has long been established. The various chapters are generally of high quality; in some one must lament the lack of much evidence of the personal opinions of the reviewer, which reduces the material to an annotated bibliography. Even this, however, is valuable in a field with as voluminous a literature as this. The book is of more value to the neuropsychiatrist as a reference work than it is to the general practitioner.